

**REMARKS**

Entry of the foregoing amendment and reconsideration of this Application are respectfully requested. Claims 1-4, 7, 8, 17-20, 22 and 24-32 are pending with claims 1 and 24 being the independent claims. Claims 1 and 24 are amended and new claim 32 is added. No new matter is introduced by the amendments or new claim. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all outstanding rejections in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

***Drawings & Specification***

The drawings stand objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) for not showing distal and proximal portions having more than one hook. Similarly, claim 29 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with written description requirement for not conveying distal and proximal portions having more than one hook. Without acquiescing to the objection and rejection, the Applicants have removed all claimed subject matter pertaining to distal and proximal portions having more than one hook. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the objection and rejection be withdrawn.

***Claim Rejections***

Claims 1-4, 17-20, 22 and 24-29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,372,600 to Beyar et al. ("*Beyar*") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,246,445 to Yachia et al. ("*Yachia*") and U.S. Patent No. 6,010,530 to Goicoechea ("*Goicoechea*").

Claims 7, 8, 30 and 31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Beyar* in view of *Yachia* and *Goicoechea* and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,645,559 to Hachtman et al. ("*Hachtman*").

Each of the foregoing rejections is addressed below.

***Independent Claim 1 and its Dependent Claims are Allowable***

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite, in part, “each of a distal end of the distal portion and a proximal end of the proximal portion including a diameter greater than a diameter of the middle portion.” None of the cited references, alone or if combined disclose or suggest such a system. Specifically, *Beyar* merely discloses a stent in the form of a coil. *Yachia* merely discloses a stent in the form of a coil that includes bulges. See *Yachia* at FIG. 1A. *Goicoechea* merely discloses a stent which has been encapsulated by a flexible polymer. Thus, none of the cited references alone, or combined, disclose or suggest the combination of elements as recited in claim 1, as amended.

Accordingly, independent claim 1 is patentable over the cited references. Based at least on their dependence upon claim 1, claims 2-4, 7, 8, 17-20, 22 and 32 are also patentable.

***Independent Claim 24 and its dependent claims are Allowable***

Claim 24 has been amended similarly as claim 1. Accordingly, for similar reasons as stated above for claim 1, claim 24 is also allowable. Based at least on their dependence upon claim 24, claims 25-31 are also allowable.

## CONCLUSION

Applicant believes that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that further personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided. Prompt and favorable consideration of the Amendment to the claims is respectfully requested.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees under 37 CFR 1.16, 1.17, and 1.21 that may be required by this paper, and to credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-1283.

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